

150 Men Idle On Housing Job

Bricklayers Refuse to Pass Through Pickets; Meeting of Leaders Is Held

More than 150 workers at the Gonzales Gardens low-cost housing project here on Forest Drive continued idle this afternoon as housing, contractor and union officials conferring on a possible settlement of employment and working condition difficulties that led to a walkout of about 75 workmen Saturday failed to reach an agreement this morning.

While carpenters, bricklayers, steel workers and helpers lined both sides of Forest Drive at the project this morning, waiting for results from the conference being held at the local housing authority office at University Terrace, a handful of laborers continued work on the construction job.

W. L. Brazelle, president of the carpenters union said there was no statement to be made in regard to the men at work, or on the difficulties that gave rise to the strike, which was led Saturday by the carpenters local No. 1778, and joined by steel-workers immediately, with a picket line being set up that was being maintained today.

Mr. Brazelle, T. H. Miller, shop steward for the carpenters' union; L. B. Chapman, business agent for the building trades federation in Columbia; L. J. Lybrand, and D. T. Swan, secretary of the carpenters' union, all representing their group at the conference, reported back to the union members on the results of the morning's conference at a meeting at Union Labor hall, 1425 Main street, this afternoon.

The union men decided to meet again at the hall tonight at 7 o'clock to hear results of the afternoon session of the conference.

Although no statement was forth-

coming, it was not believed likely that a settlement would be reached today. The carpenters have made plans to form a complete picket of the project tomorrow, it was understood.

Members of the local bricklayers union who have been on the project were not at work today as they declined to go through the picket lines set up by members of the carpenters union. The bricklayers union is to meet tonight also to decide whether or not it will officially join the strike.

Despite the lack of any official statement, it was authoritatively learned that the use of out-of-state labor on the project, sanitation conditions, what union men termed "slave-driving" of men on the job, and the presence of a board fence around the project, regarded by labor men as "a stockade," were among the complaints of the union.

Whether the few men on the job this morning, estimated at between 12 and 30 in number, were union or non-union labor could not be learned, but one of the striking carpenters said he believed they were non-union.

R. E. Skidmore, foreman on the job for the contractor, V. P. Loftis of Charlotte, N. C., said, while talking on the telephone from the construction office outside which at least 150 workers were standing idle:

"We're working right on here. We don't know whether there's a strike or not."

As automobiles passed up and down Forest Drive, a union carpenter stepped out to the edge of the pavement displaying a sign that the carpenters local was on strike.

Mr. Skidmore and Mr. Loftis were representing the contractor at the conference, Arthur Wellwood, executive director of the Columbia Housing authority, represented the housing group, while Orville Rigby, of the labor relations division of the United States Housing authority at Washington, acted as mediator.

Mr. Rigby arrived in Columbia this morning after Major Wellwood had contacted USHA officials at Washington Saturday. He satisfactorily settled a labor dispute in connection with the project last November, in connection with the laying of sewer lines, when he made a maintenance survey and established the wage rate for maintenance employes.